MICHAEL F. EASLEY
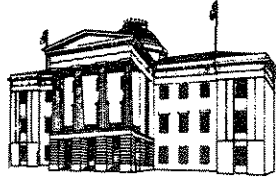GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 120
ACCELERATING TEACHER AND OTHER PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEEDED ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN IN LIGHT OF JUDICIAL MANDATES, BUDGET DEVELOPMENTS, AND IMPENDING SCHOOL OPENINGS

WHEREAS, the 2007 General Assembly enacted House Bill 2044, which keeps state government operating through July 31, 2007, and which provides additional funding for enrollment increases and which was signed into law on June 29, 2007; and

WHEREAS, in the budget submitted to the General Assembly for the 2007-09 fiscal years, I recommended funding to meet the increased operation costs of our public schools while providing for the needs of disadvantaged students; and

WHEREAS, public schools across the state must plan now for their opening in a few weeks, and the state court monitoring of North Carolina's effort to ensure a sound, basic education for every student continues; and

WHEREAS, in the school funding lawsuit, known as *Leandro*, the Court stated that at a minimum every school must be provided the resources necessary to support an effective instructional program within that school so that the educational needs of all children, including at-risk children, can be met; and

WHEREAS, the Court has isolated particular problems of meeting the needs of at-risk students in North Carolina's high schools and outlined the need for the state to bring together the "combined expertise, educators, resources, and money to fix the 'high school problem' so that the children attending those schools will be provided with the opportunity to obtain a sound, basic education;" and

WHEREAS, the Court has scheduled a *Leandro* hearing for August 1 and 2, 2007, to inquire into the proficiency of middle schools and the best practices for ensuring proficiency; and

WHEREAS, pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk children and class size reduction are necessary for improving educational opportunities and outcomes for children across North Carolina; and